Plight of Powerloom Workers

179. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether lakhs of powerloom and workers have become idle due to the spurt in cotton prices and sharp rise in the yarn prices;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have conducted any survey in various States to review the conditions of Handloom and Powerloom workers; and

(d) the remedial steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) to (c) A number of powerloom units in various regions of the country have reportedly been forced to stop production due to sudden spurt in prices of cotton and cotton yarn.

(d) The Government have taken following steps to arrest the increase in the prices of cotton and yarn:—

(i) decision to permit duty free Import of cotton upto 5 lakh bales by spinning mills;

(ii) stepping of unutilised export quota of cotton out of 5 laKh bales of cotton released for export during 1993.94;

(iii) Suspension of export on 9.2.1994 in respect of the quantity of cotton already contracted for export but not yet shipped;

(iv) Reintroduction of Selective Credit Controls on Cotton;

(v) Requesting the State Governments to take steps to check hoarding of cotton;

(vi) Arrangement for supply of hank yarn by spinning mills at prices which are at least Rs. 8.00 per kg. cheaper than January' 94 prices.

Redrafing of Textile Policy

180. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to redraft the textile policy of 1985 in view of recent GATT negotiations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have called for the views of M.Ps in this regard;

(d) if so, the reaction of the M.Ps in this regard; and

(e) by when a new textile policy is likely to be announced and implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) No such proposal is at present under consideration.

(b) to (e). Do not arise.

Stopping the Export of Cotton

181. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Government have decided not to allow further exports of cotton during the current year; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Reasons for suspending further exports of cotton are the abnormal increase in the prices of raw cotton which are in the range of 65% and 116% above the minimum support